

REMARKS

Claims 12, 13, 15-18, 23--32, and 34-38 are pending in the present application. Applicants have amended claims 12, 13, 17, 23, 28-32, and 34-36 and have cancelled claims 26, 27, 38, leaving claims 12, 13, 15-18, 23-25, 28-32, and 34-37 for consideration upon entry of this amendment.

Applicants have amended the claims to more succinctly describe the claimed invention. Accordingly, applicants submit that the proposed amendments do not raise new issues that would require further searching or consideration. Further, applicants submit that the amendments place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal. Support for the amendments can be found in the originally filed claims and on at least pages 7, 8 as well as Figures 3 and 5 of the application. Accordingly, applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced by the foregoing amendments.

Claims 35-38 were objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) because they were based on cancelled claim 33. Applicants have amended the claims 35, 36 to depend from independent claim 34. Accordingly, claims 35-37 now depend directly or indirectly from claim 34 and are believed to be allowable

Claims 35-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because claims 35-38 were based on cancelled claim 33. Applicants have amended the claims 35, 36 to depend from independent claim 34. Accordingly, claims 35-37 now depend directly or indirectly from claim 34 and are believed to be allowable.

Claims 12, 13, 15-18, 23-32 and 34-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(A) as based on the JP 4-126222 patent in view of the JP 2000-272459 patent.

Independent claim 12, as amended, requires among other limitations the following limitations: "elevating a temperature of at least one scoring device greater than or equal to the predetermined temperature of the vacuum forming tool" and "moving the at least one scoring device into only the first side of the instrument panel cover to form at least one score in the instrument panel cover defining a deployment region for an air bag cushion after elevating the temperature of the at least one scoring device."

Referring to the JP 4-126222 patent, a method for manufacturing an air bag skin is described. The JP 4-126222 patent, however, does not provide any teaching of elevating a temperature of at least one scoring device greater than or equal to the predetermined temperature of the vacuum forming tool, as recited in independent claim 12. Further, the JP 4-126222 patent does not provide any teaching of moving at least one scoring device into only the first side of the instrument panel cover to form at least one score in the instrument panel cover defining a deployment region for an air bag cushion after elevating the temperature of the at least one scoring device, as recited in claim 12.

Referring to the JP 2000-272459 patent, a method for manufacturing an air bag receptor is provided. The JP 2000-272459 patent, however, does not provide any teaching of elevating a temperature of at least one scoring device greater than or equal to the predetermined temperature of the vacuum forming tool, as recited in independent claim 12. Further, JP 2000-272459 patent does not provide any teaching of moving at least one scoring device into only the first side of the instrument panel cover to form at least one score in the instrument panel cover defining a deployment region for an air bag cushion after elevating the temperature of the at least one scoring device, as recited in claim 12.

Because neither the JP 4-126222 patent nor the JP 2000-272459 patent teach all of the limitations of independent claim 12, and claims 13, 15-18, 23-25, and 28-32 which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 12, applicants submit that claims 12, 13, 15-18, 23-25, and 28-32 are allowable over the combination of JP 4-126222 and JP 2000-272459.

Independent claim 34, as amended, requires among other limitations the following limitations: "elevating a temperature of at least one scoring device greater than or equal to the predetermined temperature of the vacuum forming tool" and "moving the at least one scoring device into only the first side of the instrument panel cover to form at least one score in the instrument panel cover defining a deployment region for an air bag cushion after elevating the temperature of the at least one scoring device."

Referring to the JP 4-126222 patent, a method for manufacturing an air bag skin is described. The JP 4-126222 patent, however, does not provide any teaching of elevating a temperature of at least one scoring device greater than or equal to the predetermined temperature of the vacuum forming tool, as recited in independent claim 34. Further, the JP 4-126222 patent does not provide any teaching of moving at least one scoring device into only the first side of the instrument panel cover to form at least one score on the instrument panel cover defining a deployment region for an air bag cushion after elevating the temperature of the at least one scoring device, as recited in claim 34.

Referring to the JP 2000-272459 patent, a method for manufacturing an air bag receptor is provided. The JP 2000-272459 patent, however, does not provide any teaching of elevating a temperature of at least one scoring device greater than or equal to the predetermined temperature of the vacuum forming tool, as recited in independent claim 34. Further, JP 2000-272459 patent does not provide any teaching of moving at least one scoring device into only the first side of the instrument panel cover to form at least one score on the instrument panel cover defining a deployment region for an air bag cushion after elevating the temperature of the at least one scoring device, as recited in claim 34.

Because neither the JP 4-126222 patent nor the JP 2000-272459 patent teach all of the limitations of independent claim 34, and claims 35-37 which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 34, applicants submit that claims 34-37 are allowable over the combination of JP 4-126222 and JP 2000-272459.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application is in a condition for allowance. Such action is most earnestly solicited. If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, he is invited to call the telephone number below for an interview.

If there are any charges due with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,  
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